



Transmedia Storytelling towards an Expanded Teaching of Reading in Distance Learning

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Abstract: This study is focused on looking into the acceptance level of the teachers relative to transmedia storytelling, views on the modification of reading tasks and activities through transmedia storytelling, and integration of transmedia storytelling in reading tasks and activities. This study focuses and limits only in describing the acceptance level of language teachers as to transmedia storytelling and on knowing the teachers' thoughts on modification of reading tasks and activities. The study used descriptive research design wherein the data were analyzed through a modified questionnaire on the level of acceptance and thematic analysis wherein responses were analyzed using open-ended questionnaire for thoughts and views on transmedia storytelling modifications and integration. The results of the study show a positive acceptance of transmedia storytelling among teachers. Furthermore, it was emphasized that transmedia storytelling is a beneficial and educational strategy for teaching reading and integration should be done through adapting and designing various media platforms. This action research presented a new reading strategy for language teachers that can be used in distance learning aimed for a contextualized and expanded teaching and learning of reading through a matrix that include selected and applicable reading texts in Grades 7-10 with transmedia storytelling media platforms.

Keywords: transmedia storytelling, teaching reading, distance learning, reading tasks, reading

1. INTRODUCTION

In the past few years, transmedia storytelling has been an emerging concept in the language learning context. Having garnered an attention and use in the media through adaptations in various contexts and the use of popular culture, the practice of transmedia storytelling in educational context has now been well-recognized.

The term transmedia storytelling has been coined and designed by Henry Jenkins, a professor of communication, journalism, cinematic arts and education at the University of Southern California. According to Jenkins (2007), transmedia storytelling is a process where “integral elements of a fiction get dispersed systematically across multiple delivery channels for the purpose of creating a unified and coordinated entertainment experience. Ideally, each medium makes its own unique contribution to the unfolding of the story.”

Moreover, Jenkins (2007) also emphasized that in transmedia storytelling, is not based on characters or plots of a certain fiction or literary piece but on the creation of various fictional worlds which supports the interrelation of the characters and the stories behind the characters. With this, the word-building process is being encouraged through a desire coming from the readers and writers.

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In the media sector, transmedia storytelling poses contribution as to the development of narratives or episodes in order for the story to make sense with the viewers and eventually, enhance the viewers' experience across multiple media. Also, Jenkins (2007) underscored that transmedia storytelling "requires a high degree of coordination across the different media sectors, it has so far worked best either in independent projects where the same artist shapes the story across all of the media involved or in projects where strong collaboration (or co-creation) is encouraged across the different divisions of the same company."

In the field of academe, transmedia storytelling is a very useful tool in engaging the learners in learning tasks. According to Dudacek (2015), "transmedia through various platforms – such as comics, books, short videos, alternative video games and movies or documentaries should increase engagement of the studied topics, simplify process of memorizing knowledge and skills and make the teaching process more effective and entertaining." (p. 695)

1.1. Language Education

In language education, related studies on transmedia storytelling posed positive outcomes in learning the language and the reading skill. The study of [6] Kartika Sari Amirulloh and Amir Zikri (2019) on transliterate reading through transmedia storytelling showed a considerably positive result as transmedia storytelling helped in the development of the students' trans modality awareness which included awareness of pictures, sound and interaction through new media, thus, found significant in transliterate reading skills.

Moreover, Roccanti and Garland (2015) emphasized the use of transmedia storytelling in the development of language arts classroom particularly:

Engaging with transmedia literacy requires students to develop technological proficiency, analyze multimodal texts, and collaborate with others to create new knowledge through the negotiation and synthesis of various content. Not only this, but transmedia stories provide a unified narrative through which students can develop these literacies. The narrative of the transmedia story provides a scaffold for students, through the overlapping story content, as they develop new literacies. (p. 19)

Language education studies on transmedia storytelling also focused on reading and writing skills. Weaver (2015) used transmedia storytelling and the exploration of shared words. It was emphasized in the study that transmedia storytelling opens opportunities for students and teachers to become creators in an environment of learning and self-expression, thus, fosters the concept that everyone must be savvy and skillful especially now in the 21st century education.

Furthermore, the employment of transmedia storytelling in different media platforms posed positive feedbacks among students learning English. Gilardi and Reid (2011) explained that through transmedia storytelling, Chinese students were able to take responsibility in the creation of digital media which was distributed to their classmates thus, promotes active learning.

Also, Rodrigues and Bidarra (2016) explored transmedia storytelling by providing a prototype as an educational strategy for learning English as a Second Language. The study created a storyworld for the students and engaged on providing multimodal texts and activities thus, prompted the students

to give inputs and accounts based on prior knowledge and experiences. The study resulted to improvement in retention and generation of students' learning output.

1.2. Transmedia Storytelling on Reading and Literacy

Research and articles on transmedia storytelling also focused on explaining its effect and influence in reading and literacy. Among these studies is of Scolari, Rodriguez and Masanet (2019). The study explored transmedia storytelling as an intervention for skills relative to storytelling production. In the study, the learners were able to use transmedia storytelling to learn about a literary work and prompted reflection in literature and established connection between formal and informal learning.

Sánchez Martínez and Albaladejo-Ortega (2018) underscored transmedia storytelling stating that “throughout the course of study, students created pieces that satisfied predetermined premises and principles, demonstrate their comprehension of the mechanics applied, and made a distinctive and valuable contribution to the whole literal work and the obtained academic and professional capacities relevant to the 21st century.” (p. 60)

Furthermore, Fleming (2013) stated transmedia storytelling can be a tool for expanding learning opportunities such as creating opportunities for exploration, interpretation, and expansion. Thus, transmedia storytelling may be used to leverage and engage the students through an immersion and interaction between story and technology.

Also, Polo Rojas (2018) underscored that transmedia storytelling is a venue for negotiation between school institutionalism and the personal and informal literary activities that young learners encounter in daily life. Thus, the realization of world representations, text interpretations and skills in development are observed in transmedia storytelling.

Hayati (2012) provided a significant point on transmedia storytelling emphasizing that “because transmedia storytelling needs coordination across the different media sectors, the collaboration would definitely be impossible without imagination and creativity, thus transmedia storytelling is not just storytelling, but as readers response criticism says, it is much of give-and-take relationship which needs creativity, ability to communicate efficiently and judge the final product.” (p.198)

Looking closely, transmedia storytelling has been one of the approaches or strategy in education which brings the use of technology closer to teachers and students making education more adaptive to the trends in the new media. As what Dudacek (2015) emphasized, “if young people would know that some interactive application which should be used on several media – based on their preference or based on teacher's instructions – they are more willing to try them and use them.” (p. 695). However, most of these studies are concentrated on transmedia storytelling as used in the media and learning engagement in education. There are few studies which focused on views of teachers in using transmedia storytelling and its integration in reading activities.

This research aims to use the following principles and background of transmedia storytelling in explaining its use in the English language teaching and learning particularly in the context teaching reading as a future basis for modification of reading tasks and activities with the aid of transmedia storytelling in the context of distance education or learning.

This study aimed to explore English teachers' acceptance level, modification of reading tasks and integration relative to transmedia storytelling. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the acceptance level of language teachers to transmedia storytelling in relation to teaching reading?
2. What do language teachers think about transmedia storytelling modifications on the reading activities and tasks in relation to distance learning?
3. How can transmedia storytelling be integrated in the reading tasks or activities?

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1. Sampling

The participants of the study were the identified through a purposive sampling. Such participants were based on the use of purposive sampling intended for the purpose and objectives of this study. Purposive sampling is considered as this type of sampling parallels with the criteria of the intended participants which are: 1. English teachers of Pag-asa National High School and 2. Teaching reading through suggested tasks and activities. Such purposive sampling resulted to 8 participants.

2.2. Data Collection

In gathering of data, permission to conduct research was asked to the principal and once approved; the researchers already prepared the questionnaires for the respondents. The respondents also were informed of the objectives of the research.

In terms of the questionnaire used, the researcher adapted the questionnaire from the study, “Transmedia Storytelling in education: English language teachers' acceptance of application of Transmedia Storytelling to Teaching Contexts” by Saltik (2017). A letter of permission to use the questionnaire with some modifications to meet the local context was sent to the author.

The questionnaires were distributed to the participants through e-mail. A day was given to the participants to accomplish the questionnaire and send the questionnaires back to the researcher.

The results or data gathered from the questionnaires were encoded and tabulated in order to explain the acceptance level of teachers in using transmedia storytelling as well as their thoughts and perceptions on the integration and modifications in the reading activities and tasks in relation to transmedia storytelling in the distance learning. Confidentiality of the data was highly taken into consideration.

2.3. Ethical Considerations

The possible ethical issues that may emanate from the conduct of research were the issues of confidentiality and anonymity in relation to the respondents of the study. Such issue was prevented by assigning a specific number to correspond to each of the respondents instead of their names or names of the respondents shall not be required in answering the research instrument.

2.4. Data Analysis

In analyzing the data gathered, the researcher used the descriptive type of research or research design. Descriptive research as a design is used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena and to describe what is on the phenomena with respect to variables or conditions in a situation.

Furthermore, the researcher used percentage, and Mean (X) as statistical treatment to describe the status or current information of the respondents and their acceptance level with regards to the use of transmedia storytelling. From then, the level of acceptance of the teachers on the use of transmedia storytelling in the context of teaching reading was determined.

In addition, thematic analysis of the teachers' thoughts and perceptions on the modifications in the reading activities and tasks through transmedia storytelling in relation to distance learning as well as its integration in the reading activities or tasks were also considered.

The participants' perceptions, thoughts and observations were tabulated, coded, and interpreted to show or describe how transmedia storytelling be used in teaching reading in the context of distance learning.

From the analysis and interpretation of data, the researcher put it into action or output by creating a modified reading tasks and activities incorporating transmedia storytelling in selected literary pieces from Grade 7-10 English.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1: What is the acceptance level of language teachers to transmedia storytelling in relation to teaching reading?

Table 1. Acceptance Level of Teachers towards Transmedia Storytelling

Statement	Mean (X)	Descriptive Mark
1. It will be easy to teach reading with transmedia storytelling	3.75	Agree
2. It will be useful to adapt transmedia storytelling in reading	4.25	Strongly Agree
3. Teaching with transmedia storytelling will motivate students and engage them in learning.	4.50	Strongly Agree
4. Probably there will be significant scholars of education who will support transmedia storytelling's application to teaching reading	4.38	Strongly Agree
5. My institution will value using transmedia storytelling in the teaching.	3.88	Agree
6. Adapting transmedia storytelling to my classroom will increase the quality of my teaching.	4.63	Strongly Agree
7. Teaching reading with transmedia storytelling worries me.	2.13	
8. It scares me that using transmedia storytelling in the classroom will make the teaching less efficient.	2.00	Disagree

Table 1 presents the acceptance level of the English teachers on the use of transmedia story telling in teaching reading. Based on the responses of the participants they agree that it would be easy to teach reading with the aid of transmedia storytelling with a mean of 3.75. The agreement may be relative to the nature of transmedia storytelling—using various media platforms in telling stories. In addition, there is a strong sense of acceptance as to the usefulness of transmedia storytelling in teaching reading, motivation, and engagement of students with regards to transmedia storytelling and perception on the increase of quality of teaching in relation to transmedia storytelling. The said criteria garnered mean scores of 4.25, 4.50 and 4.625. Such responses underscore the idea of the

teachers on the benefits of using transmedia storytelling. Since transmedia storytelling includes various media platforms, the responses of the teachers also reflect their knowledge and practice of the use of technology in their classrooms. Thus, the value of transmedia storytelling in distance or online learning is highly considered as reflected on the respondents' acceptance of transmedia storytelling.

Furthermore, teachers also agree that schools would value transmedia storytelling (3.875). Since transmedia storytelling has just garnered attention in the last few years, the studies that would support its employment in education is not that many thus, teachers' view on the support of the school on transmedia storytelling is positive to encourage exploration and use of transmedia storytelling in classrooms.

Also, relative to transmedia storytelling amidst being a new teaching strategy in teaching reading or in education in general, the teachers responded that there are little apprehensions and worries as to its impact on teaching efficiency (2.125 and 2.00). This may show that teachers have little reservations but the willingness to use transmedia storytelling in this current state of education proves their acceptance.

The results may indicate a positive acceptance among the teachers and their openness to be introduced with a new strategy that may be used in teaching reading in a distance learning setup. This result supported how Hayati (2012) emphasized that the success of transmedia storytelling has something to do with coordination and collaboration as it is a give and take relationship that fosters the creativity and the ability to communicate efficiently. Thus, between the teachers and learners who are to explore the use of transmedia storytelling.

Research Question 2: What do language teachers think about transmedia storytelling modifications on the reading activities and tasks in relation to distance learning?

Table 2. Teachers' views on transmedia storytelling modifications in reading activities

Category/Theme	Datum as Support	Codes/Interpretation
BENEFICIAL	Participant 1: "This will bring out the best of the spare time and the focus of the students while in quarantine because it reduce their anxiety and boredom at home." Respondent 3: "I think transmedia storytelling would be useful in this time of pandemic, it will add help to learning of students. Another resources of learning." Participant 5: "It is very timely since we are in the midst wherein the delivery of the lesson is very hard. I think transmedia will be very beneficial in enhancing reading skills at the same time we will not have to worry about on how we can deliver the lesson since we have options in terms of modality and platforms."	The initial codes for this theme are helpful, beneficial, supplemental and useful.
EDUCATIONAL	Participant 4: "I think, it's a good way for the students to explore more the world web and be creative on their own ways." Participant 6: "Using transmedia storytelling will be very useful in the new normal setting. Students will be able to given options suitable and convenient for their learning conditions, styles, and capacities."	The initial codes for this theme are exploration, creativity, useful and convenience.

Participant 7: "I believe that media plays big impact in our lives today. That's why transmedia story telling will be exciting and educational for students."

Table 2 explains the views and thoughts of the teachers on the modification of reading tasks and activities using transmedia storytelling relative to distance learning. Based on the coding and interpretation of emerged codes as themes, the teachers view transmedia storytelling as a beneficial way to engage the students in reading lessons. This result may be directed to their existing knowledge of transmedia storytelling in education. Moreover, the teachers also expressed the notion of the importance of media and technology in enhancing students' learning especially now in distance learning. These results agree with Fleming (2013) wherein it was emphasized that transmedia storytelling can be a tool for expanding learning opportunities and be used to leverage and engage the students through an immersion and interaction between story and technology.

Another theme that emerged is educational. In this particular theme, the participants expressed their thoughts on using transmedia storytelling in modification of reading tasks and activities as an educational way of enhancing reading among students. The way respondents viewed transmedia storytelling in this manner may be relative on transmedia storytelling's convenience in the delivery of the lesson since it encompasses various media platforms and websites. In this way, reading is reinforced among students through various opportunities for them to relate the reading text or activity. Such results give emphasis on the importance of technology in developing reading among the learners as what Weaver (2015) underscored, transmedia storytelling and the exploration of shared words opens opportunities for students and teachers to become creators in an environment of learning and self-expression, thus, fosters the concept that everyone must be savvy and skillful especially now in the 21st century education.

Research Question 3: How can transmedia storytelling be integrated in the reading tasks or activities?

Table 3. Integration of transmedia storytelling in reading tasks or activities

Category/Theme	Datum as Support	Codes/Interpretation
SUPPORTING MATERIAL	Participant 3: "I think transmedia storytelling would be useful for students, they will be motivated and more engaged in learning. And for teachers, it can be used as a supporting material in the classroom."	The initial codes for this theme are motivating, engaging, useful and supporting material.
ADAPTING	Participant 1: "There should be modifications of reading tasks or activities in distance learning because of the different backgrounds and thinking processes of listeners and it must adapt to their kind of learners ability and exposure."	The initial codes for this theme are modifying, adapting, and learning exposure.
DESIGNING	Participant 2: "Designing and choosing the right platform should be considered in using transmedia storytelling to lure learners into reading and engage themselves in various activities." Participant 7: "Maybe it's possible, but it will require the creator to create a very interactive	The initial codes for this theme are creating, designing, choosing, and engaging.

and realistic student teacher setting in doing so.”

Table 3 shows the participants’ thoughts on the integration of transmedia storytelling in reading tasks or activities. Based on their responses, the teachers show an understanding that in the integration of transmedia storytelling in reading tasks or activities, such should be a supporting material. This may be because the teachers are focused on the lesson delivery as prescribed by the conditions of the Department of Education. Moreover, another theme emerged based on the responses is adapting. In this theme, the respondents expressed the idea that in the integration of transmedia storytelling, adapting existing media platforms should be done by considering the backgrounds and abilities of the learners. As transmedia storytelling is a relatively new strategy, an exploration, application, and study on this may be considered as what Roccanti and Garland (2015) emphasized, transmedia storytelling and engaging with transmedia literacy requires students to develop technological proficiency, analysis, and collaboration, thus, teachers are subjected as well to develop such requirements.

Lastly, the participants looked into the integration of transmedia storytelling in reading tasks or activities through the theme designing. Looking closely, this theme suggests that the integration may be done by the teachers through creating and choosing various media platforms for students. Also, the designing of these media platforms should include engagement in various activities that are interactive and realistic for the students. These results agree to Dudacek (2015) which emphasized that transmedia through various platforms should increase engagement of the studied topics, simplify process of memorizing knowledge and skills and make the teaching process more effective and entertaining.

4. CONCLUSIONS

This study on transmedia storytelling geared towards an expanded teaching reading in distance learning looked into three areas—acceptance level of teachers on the use of transmedia storytelling, views on transmedia storytelling modifications and integration of transmedia storytelling in reading tasks or activities.

Generally, the respondents had a positive acceptance level on the use of transmedia storytelling with responses ranging from agree to strongly agree. Thus, transmedia storytelling proves to be a promising strategy for teachers when it comes to teaching reading in distance learning.

In addition, the teachers view transmedia storytelling modifications as something beneficial and educational. With the use of technology and intensified more in this new normal or distance learning the teachers noted that transmedia storytelling may be a useful teaching strategy to enhance the reading experience of students. As it includes different media platforms and various technology-driven experiences for learners, the respondents looked into it as a helpful tool for reading in a teaching and learning context.

Lastly, the teachers expressed the integration of transmedia storytelling in reading tasks and activities as a supporting material. Moreover, adapting existing transmedia platforms and designing new transmedia storytelling platforms were raised by the teachers. These were underscored since adapting and designing include the context and abilities of the learners.

With the results and discussion of this study, a suggested and modified reading activities matrix with integration of transmedia storytelling shall be drafted by the researchers upon discussion among the teachers. The said matrix shall include selected and applicable reading texts in Grades 7-10 with transmedia storytelling media platforms. Moreover, the development of the use shall be recorded and monitored through Learning Action Cell (LAC) session or department meetings of the department.

Due to a limited scope of this action research, it is recommended that a more thorough study shall be done in the use of transmedia storytelling. Another study may be done in a quantitative design after the modifications of reading tasks and activities by looking into its effect in reading comprehension or reading fluency among students. Further studies may also be done with students as participants or respondents of the study.

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